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SECRET

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Central Intelligence Bulletin

CONTENTS

Communist China - USSR: Both sides are increasing their war of nerves. (Page 1)



25X1

Hungary-Yugoslavia-USSR: Condemnation of Soviet Marxism by a leading Hungarian Marxist will embarrass the government. (Page 3)



25X6

USSR-Cuba: Communications station (Page 5)

USSR-Ghana: Crude oil contract (Page 5)

UN: Security Council meeting (Page 6)

SECRET

SECRET

Communist China - USSR: Both sides are increasing their war of nerves as the second round of border talks resumes in Peking.

The Chinese have used a Hong Kong Communist newspaper article to lay full responsibility on Moscow for the lack of progress in the first two months of the talks. The article implied that the Soviets are attempting to apply military pressure along the Chinese border in order to gain advantage in the talks. It added that this behavior is opposed to an understanding reached during the Kosygin-Chou meeting on 11 September.

The Chinese have consistently maintained that a mutual agreement to withdraw military forces along the border must precede negotiations on other substantive border issues, and Peking doubtless expects such publicity to demonstrate China's determination to maintain its position in the talks. Moreover, Peking almost certainly judges that Moscow, as the stronger party in the dispute, is vulnerable to charges of heavy-handed pressure tactics.

Moscow signaled the complete end of its propaganda stand-down with China by issuing a 900-word blast, accusing Chinese leaders of "artificially whipping up military psychosis" and increasing "anti-Soviet slander." The attack was centered on China's "war preparations" campaign, which Tass claimed was really aimed at distracting attention from China's domestic ills and was a device for overcoming "splits and quarrels" among Peking's leaders.

Such sharp propaganda exchanges are a good indication that the border talks, which reportedly resumed last Monday, will remain at an impasse. The Chinese and Russians, however, seem to have little to gain by breaking off the discussions, and both appear to be prepared for a protracted stalemate.



25X1

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Central Intelligence Bulletin

1

SECRET

25X1

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Hungary-Yugoslavia-USSR: The condemnation of Soviet Marxism by Eastern Europe's foremost living Marxist philosopher will embarrass the Hungarian regime and may become another issue in Soviet-Yugoslav relations.

The Yugoslav party daily Borba published an interview with Gyorgy Lukacs in its 29 December and 1-2 January editions. Hungary's Lukacs blasted the Soviets for continuing distortions of Marxism and called for a "Marxist renewal" in all the Socialist countries. He also said that French and Italian workers would not want to live in the Soviets' undemocratic system. Lukacs praised Tito's self-management system--anathema to the Soviets--as a contribution to a resurgence of the basic idea of a workers' democracy. The interview appeared just after the Soviets published their Lenin Theses, which contained criticism of the Yugoslav system.

The 85-year-old Lukacs has long been known as an anti-Stalinist, but this is the first time he has so openly linked current Soviet problems to Stalinist errors. Although he holds no official positions and has often been in trouble in the past, he is a party member, and his attacks will be an embarrassment to party chief Kadar. The Kadar regime may choose to ignore the affair publicly, but it might also have to face Soviet displeasure.

Yugoslav officials will also be concerned about the interview. While they do not disagree with Lukacs, they do not want Hungary's cautious liberalization jeopardized by tighter Soviet controls. When Yugoslav Foreign Minister Tepavac arrives in Budapest on 12 January, he may well deny that the interview had official sanction.



25X1

10 Jan 70

Central Intelligence Bulletin

3

SECRET

SECRET

NOTES

USSR-Cuba: Moscow has agreed to assist in building a ground station in Cuba for telephone, telegraph, and TV communications via satellite under the terms of an agreement signed on 9 January. The two countries had announced their intention to proceed with this project in 1966 and 1967, but the recent warming in political relations may have provided the impetus to move forward at this time. Implementation of the agreement, which may take place within the next year or two, would for the first time provide the USSR with a ground station that can both send and receive outside of Soviet borders. According to press reports, it would give Cuba direct multichannel telegraph and telephone links with the Soviet Union and would also make possible the exchange of TV programs between the two countries.

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USSR-Ghana: It is likely that the Soviet Union this year will provide more than half of Ghana's crude oil requirements, contrary to expectations. [REDACTED] the USSR will ship 500,000 tons of crude oil of a total 900,000 tons required for the Tema refinery. The Russians were considered to be out of the competition because in 1969 they defaulted on their contract obligations, providing only about three fourths of the 700,000 tons they had agreed to ship. Western countries were asked to fill the shortfall in 1969 and, as a result, were expected to regain the predominant supply position they once had.

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25X1

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10 Jan 70

Central Intelligence Bulletin

5

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SECRET

UN: The Security Council president for January, Terence Nsanze of Burundi, expects a Council meeting on South-West Africa to be called within two weeks. African members will try to have the Council deal with Pretoria's refusal to comply with the 4 October 1969 Council deadline for the South African administration to withdraw from the territory. Inasmuch as this will be the first Council meeting of the year, there could be a challenge to Taiwan's right to a seat. Nsanze says that Burundi will not raise the China issue and he has no indication that any other member may do so.

25X1

10 Jan 70

Central Intelligence Bulletin

6

SECRET

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